

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Timothy E. Edquist, also referred to hereafter as “Affiant,” being first duly sworn according to law, hereby depose and state:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and have been so since May 2013. As part of my duties as a FBI Special Agent, I investigate various federal violations and crimes including, but not limited to, conspiracies involving wire fraud and other fraudulent criminal acts in violation of federal law. I have been trained in various aspects of law enforcement, including the investigation of fraud. Through my education and experience, and that of other agents assisting in this investigation, I have become familiar with the methods that individuals use to defraud unsuspecting victims, specifically elderly victims, in what are identified as Grandparent Scams, or methods where criminal actors convince, or attempt to convince, senior citizens that their grandchildren have been arrested and need bail money.

2. I am submitting this affidavit in support of an Application for an Arrest Warrant pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41 and 18 U.S.C. 3052, authorizing the arrest of **OREATIO CECIL TAYLOR**, date of birth 10/25/1989.

3. Affiant is fully familiar with the facts of the case either as the result of direct personal participation in the investigation or from verbal or written reports provided to me by law enforcement officers who have participated in the investigation. In that regard, unless otherwise noted, wherever in this affidavit Affiant asserts that a statement was made, the information was provided to me by a law enforcement officer, or a witness who may have had either direct or hearsay knowledge of that statement and to whom Affiant or others have spoken

or whose reports your Affiant has read and reviewed. Such statements are set forth in this affidavit in substance or in pertinent part unless otherwise indicated. Furthermore, since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing an Arrest Warrant, I have not included the details of every aspect of the investigation.

4. Based upon the investigation to date, I assert probable cause exists to believe that on or about March 19, 2020, in the Northern District of Ohio, **OREATIO CECIL TAYLOR** did commit a violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section § 1343, that is Fraud by Wire.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVESTIGATION

5. On or about Tuesday March 17, 2020, Officers with the Sagamore Hills Police Department received a report of fraudulent activity involving the reporting party's 86-year-old mother-in-law, identified in this affidavit as VICTIM-1. According to the reporting party, VICTIM-1 fell victim to a scam, the day prior (March 16, 2020) in which VICTIM-1 lost a total of \$7000.

6. On or about Tuesday March 17, 2020, Sagamore Hills Police Department Officers responded to VICTIM-1's residence, which was located in Sagamore Hills, Ohio, in Summit County, in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, to speak with her directly about the fraudulent crime that occurred on the day prior (March 16, 2020). VICTIM-1 advised officers that she received a call from an unidentified male caller stating that her granddaughter had been involved in an accident and that she was going to be arrested. The unidentified male caller told VICTIM-1 that her granddaughter would need \$7,000 in order to post bond before she could be released from police custody. VICTIM-1 said that an unidentified female caller then began to speak on the telephone call who VICTIM-1, at the time, believed to be her granddaughter. VICTIM-1 noted that the unidentified female speaking on the telephone call was crying and appeared to be very upset.

7. Following the telephone call with the unidentified male and unidentified female callers, VICTIM-1 advised that she then went to PNC Bank in Macedonia and withdrew \$7,000 in cash from her account and subsequently returned home. VICTIM-1 received several more phone calls on her home telephone from the original unidentified male and also two other telephone call from unidentified individuals who stated that they were the prosecutor and the public defender. The original unidentified male caller advised VICTIM-1 of several locations where she could drop off the \$7,000 in cash, one of them being an unidentified location in Bedford, Ohio. The unidentified male told VICTIM-1 that as a result of an accident on the highway, he would be rerouted and would be driving in the direction of her home anyway and that he could just stop by VICTIM-1 residence to pick the money, in person, and VICTIM-1 agreed.

8. VICTIM-1 advised that on March 16, 2020, at approximately 12:00 p.m., a black male, between 30 and 40 years of age, between 5'10' and 6'0" in height, with a bulky build, and wearing a shirt with a logo on it (possibly "Nationwide Bonds"), arrived at her residence. VICTIM-1 advised officers that she gave the unidentified black male the money and that he gave her a generic receipt with the number 090974 and a "file" number of B7191R42, in return. The unidentified black male then left the residence and no vehicle description was provided. VICTIM-1 recalled that one of the parties on the telephone mentioning that Columbus, Ohio, area or Columbiana County, Ohio, area.

9. VICTIM-1 told officers that after she gave the \$7,000 to the unidentified black male, the original unidentified male caller called her again and informed her that he would be needing another \$13,000 because the person that her granddaughter had injured in the accident was injured worse than originally thought and that the crime she was charged was now higher. The unidentified male caller began to ask VICTIM-1 if she would be able to get the money possibly

from selling stock or savings bonds. VICTIM-1 told him that the only way she might be able to get the cash would be by taking a loan on her life insurance policy but that it would take a few days for them to get her the check. Shortly thereafter, the unidentified male caller told VICTIM-1 that he was going to be in the office until 10:00 p.m., on March 17, 2020, and that he would call her and see if she was able to get the rest of the money and arrange for another pick up.

10. On March 19, 2020, the original unknown male contacted VICTIM-1 to find out if VICTIM-1 had acquired \$8,000 from a life insurance policy as previously discussed. VICTIM-1 told the unknown male that VICTIM-1 had \$8,000 in cash from an equity loan. VICTIM-1 contacted the Sagamore Hills Police Department to advise the police that the unknown male had called about additional cash. Sagamore Hills Police Department Sgt. Dan Rice and Detective Victoria Miavitz responded to VICTIM-1's residence. Sgt. Rice remained inside VICTIM-1's residence and witnessed VICTIM-1's telephonic communications with the unidentified male caller. Other Sagamore Hills Police Department Officers conduct surveillance of the neighborhood.

11. At approximately 1:55 p.m., the unknown male called VICTIM-1 and advised that someone would be coming to pick up the money. Another call was received at approximately 2:23 p.m. from an unknown male who advised Nationwide Bonding would be coming to get the money and they were looking for a bondsman to complete the transaction. The unknown male called at approximately 2:34 p.m. and requested VICTIM-1 to leave her house and meet him in Bedford. VICTIM-1 told the unknown male she was not able to leave her house and the male asked how wet her backyard was. At approximately 4:22 p.m., the unknown male requested VICTIM-1 to put the cash in her mailbox right away. The mailbox is attached to the house within arm's reach of the front door. VICTIM-1 proceed to place a piece of paper in the mailbox.

12. At approximately 4:24 p.m., Officers observed a white Chevy Silverado bearing Indiana license plate number FL603ABL, briefly stopped on the street directly in front of VICTIM-1's driveway. Officers observed the black male driver of the white Chevy Silverado briefly speak with the unidentified driver of a black pickup truck before pulling into VICTIM-1's driveway and parking the vehicle. Officers observed the black pickup truck left the area, immediately thereafter. Officers observed a black male wearing dark pants, a white sweatshirt, and a hat exit the vehicle and walk towards the front door. Officers then took the black male into custody at approximately 6:25PM, and identified him as **OREATIO CECIL TAYLOR**, date of birth 10/25/1989. **TAYLOR** was a Bahamian national who had overstayed his visa by approximately five years. Taylor did not possess a passport or other travel identity document except a Bahamas driver's license.

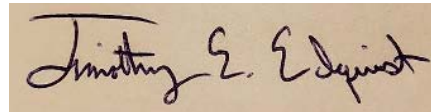
13. **TAYLOR** was detained and later found to be in possession a partially used receipt booklet, which contained receipts similar to the receipt provided to VICTIM-1 by the unidentified black male on March 16, 2020. An inventory search involving a tow of **TAYLOR**'s Chevy Silverado, which he had rented from Florida, produced a single completed receipt, with water damage, that also appeared to be from the same receipt booklet that was found on **TAYLOR**'s person. In addition, a single bank envelope, as well as two sheets of paper containing what appear to be the names and addresses of other unconfirmed individuals, were found during the search of **TAYLOR**'s Chevy Silverado rental vehicle.

14. After being advised of his Miranda rights, which he waived, during an interview with **TAYLOR** at the Sagamore Hills police department, **TAYLOR** stated that he drove from Columbus, Ohio to Victim-1's house. For the purpose of executing and attempting to execute this Grandparent Scam, the scheme and artifice to defraud described above, **TAYLOR** transmitted and

caused to be transmitted by means of wire communication in interstate commerce, writings, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds, to wit: **TAYLOR** used a map application on his Apple iPhone to access the Internet to identify the location of VICTIM-1's home.

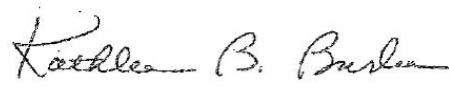
15. Based upon the foregoing, I respectfully request that a Warrant be issued authorizing law enforcement officers to arrest **OREATIO CECIL TAYLOR** for a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343, Wire Fraud.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy E. Edquist
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO ME THIS 20TH DAY OF MARCH, 2020
VIA TELEPHONE AFTER SUBMISSION BY RELIABLE ELECTRONIC
MEANS. FED. R. CRIM. P. 4.1 and 41(d)(3).



Kathleen B. Burke, U.S. Magistrate Judge